

2024 DISCOVERY CUP OFFICIAL RULES

Tournament Headquarters will be located at the Discovery Sports Center at the Maryland SoccerPlex located at 18031 Central Park Circle, Boyds, MD 20841.

I. TOURNAMENT APPLICATION

Teams that withdraw from the tournament after acceptance will not be refunded their application fee and may be sanctioned in future tournaments.

II. ELIGIBILITY

Participation in the DISCOVERY CUP Soccer Tournament is open to accepted teams with rosters consisting of players meeting the age limit and maximum roster size of the specified division. Players must have been born during, or subsequent to, the divisional year, as defined by US Soccer Guidelines.

A team using guest players may have no more than five (5) guest players previously approved by the Tournament Committee. Each team must be registered with a US Soccer affiliate and must present a valid State roster. The only acceptable proof of age will be a valid US Soccer State registration card that includes a signature and a photograph of the player. Players who do not present valid player passes will not play. Any team fielding an ineligible player will be disqualified and its tournament fee will be forfeited. Player passes may NOT be co-mingled!

A player may compete for only one team participating in the tournament.

Age groups:

U15 and under (January 1, 2010)

U14 and under (January 1, 2011)

U13 and under (January 1, 2012)

U12 and under (January 1, 2013)

U11 and under (January 1, 2014)

U10 and under (January 1, 2015)

U09 and under (January 1, 2016)

III. GAME FORMAT

- **U9-U10 – 7v7**
One referee per game. No club linesman.
Roster size – 14 players
- **U11-U12 –9v9**
One referee per game. No club linesman.
Roster size – 16 players
- **U13-U15 – 11v11**
Three-person referee team per game.
Roster size – 22 players for U13-U15 but may only dress 18 per game

IV. PLAYERS

- All players must meet the age requirements and be listed on the team roster with unique jersey numbers.
- Boys may not be rostered on girls' teams.

V. PLAYER PASSES

- Players must have approved player passes in order to play. No pass – no play policy.

VI. GUEST/LOAN PLAYERS

- Teams may roster up to 5 guest players which must be approved by the Tournament Director.
- **U13 and older:** Players may only guest play on one team, however, if their primary team is entered into the tournament, they may not guest on another team entered into the tournament.
- **U9-U12:** Age-appropriate players who are members of the same club can be part of the team's tournament roster and not count against the guest player limit.
- Guest players may come from any FIFA or USSF affiliated association/team.
- A jersey must be provided to the guest player by the host team.
- **Player passes may NOT be co-mingled between USYS or US Club**

VII. HOME TEAM JERSEY

- The first team listed in the schedule is the home team.
- The home team must have an alternate jersey and be prepared to change, if in the opinion of the referee, there is a color conflict.
- Team jerseys must match with unique numbers for each player as submitted on the Official Tournament Roster.
- Sharing of jerseys is NOT permitted.

VIII. LAWS OF THE GAME

- All games shall be played in accordance with FIFA Laws, except as specifically modified by these rules.
- There will be no pre-game warm-up in the GOAL area on grass fields.
- No overtime will be played during group competition.
- Red cards will be administered as per FIFA Laws of the game:
 - o A player sent off for a second caution will not be allowed to play for the remainder of the game and the next game.
 - o The referee will display both the yellow and red cards to indicate the dismissal for the second cautionable offense.
 - o A player sent off for any other reason will not be allowed to play for the remainder of that game and the next game at a minimum.
 - o Violence may result in more than a one game suspension by tournament committee decision.
 - o If a player receives a red card, the player pass will be retained by the referee and forwarded to Tournament Headquarters.
 - o A red card report will be sent to all affiliate state associations within 72 hours of completion of the tournament.
- Any coach sent off the field by the referee shall not be allowed to coach for the remainder of that game and the next game.
- Any player receiving three (3) yellow cards in the tournament will sit out the next game following receipt of the third yellow card. This will apply to play-off rounds and final matches. Please note this is a policy of the Maryland State Youth Soccer Association.

- Heading the ball is prohibited in U11 games and younger. At age group divisions U11 and younger, whenever the ball strikes a player in the head, play is stopped. If deliberate, then the proper restart is an indirect free kick to the opposing team. If this occurs within the goal area, the indirect free kick should be taken on the goal area line parallel to the goal line at the point nearest to where the infringement occurred. If the play by the head is deemed inadvertent, then the proper restart is a dropped ball.

IX. SUBSTITUTIONS

- FIFA laws of the game concerning substitutions will be followed as outlined below with the referee's permission:
 - after a goal has been made
 - at a goal kick by either team
 - at the beginning of the second half of play or prior to the beginning of an overtime period
 - at a throw-in (if the team with possession subs a player, the opposing team may also sub)
 - Limited substitutions may be made, with the referee's permission, in case of stoppage of play for an injury on a one-for-one basis for the injured player(s). No substitutions on corner kicks will be permitted.

X. FIELD & GAME EQUIPMENT

- No metal cleats will be allowed.
- No jewelry will be allowed.
- Players are required to wear shin guards in accordance with FIFA Laws of the Game.
- Hard casts are not prohibited, but they must receive "explicit" approval from the referee before a player wearing such a cast is allowed to play in the game. All casts must have the approval of the Referee. It is not a given that soft casts will be approved.
- Both teams will take the same side of the field. All other supporters will take the opposite side. Only three team officials are permitted on the sidelines with their players.
- No one will be permitted behind either end line.
- Coaching may only occur on the team's half of the sideline from the center line within 30 yards of the end line.
- When requested by the referee, each team must provide a club linesperson. The club lines person may only determine balls out of play.
- Check-in time at your assigned playing field is 20 minutes prior to the scheduled kick off.

XI. DURATION OF GAMES & BALL SIZE

U9	4	50 minutes
U10	4	60 Minutes
U11-12	4	60 minutes
U13-14	5	60 minutes
U15	5	70 minutes

All games will be played with a running clock. The referee will not add time for injuries or other incidents, including but not limited to deliberate wasting of time. The referee is the official timekeeper and all decisions regarding game duration are at the discretion of the official.

XII. OFFICIAL GAME BALL

- The HOME TEAM will supply the referee the official game ball for the match.
- U9-U12 teams use a size 4 ball
- U13-U15 teams use a size 5 ball

XIII. GAME AND SCORE REPORTING

- After every game, the referee will complete a game card to report the score. The winning coach must verify both scores on the game card after the game. Any scores that are marked incorrectly on the game card will affect the standings and playoff standings.
- Uniform numbers must be accompanied by player names if a card is issued.
- Scores are posted on the event website and at the Discovery Tournament Headquarters tent.

XIV. FAILURE TO SHOW AND FORFEITS

- A team shall be allowed a ten (10) minute grace period after the scheduled kick-off time before the match is awarded to their opponent. A minimum of seven (7) players constitutes a team and if seven (7) players are present, the game will not be delayed.
- In no case shall a team that forfeits or does not show up for a game be declared a division winner or wild card team. If an apparent division winner forfeits a game or does not show up for play, the division team with the next best record shall be named the division winner.
- A forfeit in the preliminary round will be awarded as two (2) points for the win and the score will stand at the time of the forfeit. If the score is 0-0 at the time of the forfeit, the score will be recorded at 1-0.
- Forfeits in the playoff rounds shall be recorded as 1-0 games.

XV. PROTESTS

No protests will be entertained.

XVI. CONDUCT

- Players, coaches, and spectators are expected to conduct themselves within the spirit of the Law as well as the letter of the Law. Displays of temper or dissent are cause for ejection from the game and surrounding field area. Team officials are responsible for the behavior of the spectators. Team officials can be disciplined by the referee for failure to control their spectators. The Tournament Director has the ability to ban a spectator, forfeit a match, or expel a team from the competition for violations or abuse of a referee or the referee crew. Repeated violations may result in the suspension of the team from the tournament as decided by the Tournament Committee. The local authorities will be called if necessary.
- Zero tolerance for fighting or heckling. Persons exhibiting these behaviors will be asked to leave the premises.
- Misconduct by any of the above listed may result in a warning, game forfeit, tournament disqualification or other action if necessary.
- Any player, coach, or team official ejected from a game for violent conduct (fighting) shall result in suspension of the player, coach or team official for the remainder of the tournament. Any player, coach, team official or parent exhibiting or threatening violence to anyone (player, coach, referee, spectator or tournament official) will call for immediate expulsion from the tournament.
- Any misconduct as specified above will be reported to the team's respective National or Provincial Association.

XVII. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE NOT PERMITTED AT GAME SITES

XVIII. MECHANICAL NOISEMAKERS ARE PROHIBITED

XIX. DETERMINATION OF DIVISION WINNERS

Each team will be awarded three (3) points for a win, one (1) point for a tie, and no points for a loss. At the end of the preliminary rounds, the division winner will be the team with the most points in their division. In the event of a tie within a division, the following criteria will be used to determine the winner:

1. Head-to-head competition (this criterion will not be considered in the case of a tie among more than two (2) teams).
2. Most wins
3. Goal Differential – (goals for vs. goals against with positive goals counting) with a net of three (3) goals per game. For example, 6-3 and 3-0 scores for each earn three bonus points. A lose does not affect goal differential.
4. Most shutouts
5. Goals Against
6. FIFA penalty kicks

In the event of a tie among more than two teams, once a tie is broken by the above system, and if ties among remaining teams still must be decided, those ties would be broken by starting again from the top of the tie-breaking procedure.

In the event that a wildcard team must be selected for the playoff rounds, the above procedure will be used across the entire flight.

If a division winner does not show up for play, the division team with the next best record shall be named the division winner.

XX. AWARDS

Awards will be given to members of teams who compete in the championship match (Champions and Finalists receive awards).

XXI. PLAYOFFS

A. Winners of each division advance into the playoff rounds.

B. If a wild card team must be selected for the playoff rounds, that team will not be assigned to play against the winner of its own division in the first playoff round.

C. During a final match, if a tie score exists at the end of regulation time, the FIFA penalty kick procedure will determine the winner. The winner will be determined as follows:

Kicks from the Penalty Mark - The best of five penalty kicks taken alternately by each team will determine the winner. Only those players on the field at the end of the overtime period may compete. If the penalty kick score is tied at the end of the five kicks, the teams will continue to take penalty kicks alternately until there is a winner. All players on the field must kick before any player may kick a second time.

INCLEMENT WEATHER AND REFUNDS

In the event of inclement weather, the Tournament Committee will have the authority to change games as follows:

- A. Reschedule any game(s).
- B. Change the duration of any game(s).
- C. Cancel any preliminary game(s) that have no bearing on the selection of division winners.

D. Preliminary games terminated after one half of play because of weather shall be considered official as of the time of termination.

E. Cancel the Tournament in whole or in part.

Refunds for Weather Cancellations

If the Discovery Cup is cancelled in part or entirely due to weather, teams will be issued refunds of the application fee after all costs for the tournament have been paid. Please note that refunds may be issued in the form of direct payment, credits for future events, or a combination thereof.

Refunds for Team Withdrawals

Discovery Cup will issue a full refund to teams withdrawing prior to tournament acceptance date. Any team withdrawing after the Acceptance Date will forfeit their full application fee, regardless of the reason for withdrawing.

XXIII. TEAM CONTACT PERSON

Each team, on checking in at registration, must sign a ledger giving the hotel, room number and phone number of the coach or a designated contact person who can be reached at **any time**, should the necessity arise.

XXIV. HOUSING

All teams are required to use the official housing company of the DISCOVERY CUP – HBC Housing. This is a “Stay to Play” event. Teams not complying with tournament policy will not be granted acceptance to the tournament.

XXV. GENERAL

A. Under no circumstances whatsoever, will the Tournament Committee, The Maryland Soccer Foundation, Inc. or MSYSA be responsible for any expenses (including tournament entry fee) incurred by any team. This includes a situation where the Tournament or any game(s) is cancelled in whole or part.

B. The Tournament Committee’s interpretation of these rules shall be final.

C. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to decide on all matters pertaining to this tournament.

D. Division Coordinators, based on these rules, will determine the teams to advance into the final rounds.

SMOKING IS NOT PERMITTED – THE GERMANTOWN RECREATIONAL PARK IS A SMOKE-FREE PARK

PETS ARE NOT PERMITTED AT THE MARYLAND SOCCERPLEX

ALCOHOL IS PROHIBIT AT ALL VENUES

IT IS ILLEGAL TO OPERATE A DRONE INSIDE ANY PARK WITHIN MONTGOMERY COUNTY WITHOUT A PERMIT, REGARDLESS AS TO IF THE PILOT HAS AN FAA LICENSE.